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SECOND DRAFT
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24 Sept 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Report to the President's Board of Consultants
on Congressional Relations

1. GENERAL

a. Relations with the Congress during the second session of the 85th Congress remained essentially unchanged. However, the basic problem of satisfying the requirements of the Congress for information about the Agency and about intelligence matters generally within the proper security limitations was somewhat intensified.

b. On the one hand, the Agency appeared more frequently before congressional committees, provided more information, and made more official contacts with the Congress than in prior years. On the other hand, continuing high pressure of international affairs and certain specific instances, such as the Venezuelan riots during the Vice President's visit and the coup in Iraq, aroused increased congressional interest in the intelligence performance of the Executive Branch and in the activities of the Agency. Considerable criticism of the Agency was expressed by various members of the Congress, and there was rather widespread dissatisfaction at the amount of information available about its activities. Specific briefings, however, were

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on the whole well received, and the revival of proposals for a Joint Committee on Intelligence was not pressed to an issue.

c. The Agency, therefore, remained primarily responsive to its parent subcommittees of the Senate and House Armed Services Committees on substantive matters and to its special subcommittees of the Senate and House Appropriations Committees on appropriations.

2. CONGRESSIONAL APPEARANCES

a. ~~Since the adjournment of the first~~ session of the 85th Congress, 23 separate Agency appearances were made before congressional committees or subcommittees. This is a substantial increase over prior years. The full listing is attached as Tab A.

b. Matters covered in these hearings included extensive briefings on the world situation; presentations on Soviet bomber, guided missile, and nuclear programs; response to inquiries on the intelligence aspects of the Vice President's South American trip and on the Iraq coup; and information relating to the detection of nuclear explosions and activities. In the Appropriations hearing, the Agency requested funds in the same amount as in the prior year and the full amount was approved. In connection with the new headquarters building, the Agency pointed out that with the funds made available the building would not be able to house all departmental personnel as desired by the Congress.

3. INDIVIDUAL CONTACTS

a. In an effort to improve the rapport between the Agency and individual members of the Congress, an increased effort was made to

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brief and debrief congressmen traveling abroad. Fifty-three were debriefed during the fall and winter of 1957, 13 senators and 40 representatives. On the whole this program appeared to be well received by the congressmen involved, and the effort is continuing although travel has dropped off in the election year. Considerable useful information was obtained by the Agency, and several specific items may develop into operational assets. A statistical account of the more routine activities of the Legislative Counsel is attached as Tab B.

b. An item of significance concerns a letter from Senator Stuart Symington (D., Mo.) to the President claiming that intelligence estimates of Russian capabilities and progress in the field of guided missiles were inaccurate and overconservative and that, therefore, U. S. defense planning was inadequate to face the true threat. The Senator claimed his figures were based on sources available to the intelligence components, and his letter inferred that there was disagreement in the intelligence community with the final estimates. The President requested CIA to prepare a reply. A detailed report has been made to the White House confirming earlier estimates and the concurrence therein of all appropriate intelligence elements.

4. LEGISLATION

a. During the second session the Agency presented to the Congress official comment on 12 pieces of proposed legislation. These

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were primarily administrative proposals and on the whole presented no problems adverse to the Agency's interests. However, the Government Employees Training Act (P. L. 85-507) was passed without an opportunity for the Agency to present its objections to the bill, which repealed the Agency's own training authority and put all Government training under the Civil Service Commission unless excepted by the President. The Agency was precluded from objecting on the ground that the Administration needed the over-all bill and the congressmen controlling the subcommittee having jurisdiction threatened to block the bill if any amendments were proposed. Commitments were obtained for the Agency to be excepted by the President from any control by the Civil Service Commission. Such^{an} exception is now being processed by the Bureau of the Budget.

b. In connection with the Atomic Energy Act, on learning that the Atomic Energy Commission was proposing amendments authorizing broadening^r exchange of Restricted Data by itself and the Department of Defense with foreign countries, the Agency injected itself into consideration of this subject. The Agency felt it was essential to assure that ^{the} broader exchange^w could encompass intelligence matters to improve the combined estimative effort of ourselves and the British in the field of Russian nuclear progress. While the act as passed does not specify the intelligence role, it provides that the President may authorize any agency to exchange for its purposes Restricted Data approved for exchange under the act. The Joint Committee was

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specifically informed that this provision was intended to be the basis for the intelligence exchange. An Executive Order authorizing CIA to carry out the exchange has been forwarded to the Bureau of the Budget.

c. The Agency continued to press for consideration of amendments to the Communications Act of 1934 which would allow reciprocity with foreign governments for maintaining communications facilities in the respective countries. Reciprocity is now forbidden, and communications facilities of the Agency in foreign countries are operated on sufferance. General agreement was finally achieved in the Executive Branch, but a sounding of the Congress indicated that there would be strong opposition to such an amendment at this time.

d. During the second session six separate measures were introduced providing for the establishment of a Joint Committee on Foreign Intelligence. None of these bills was reported out of committee.

e. Senator William Langer (R., North Dakota) introduced a resolution (Senate Resolution 338) calling for investigation of CIA by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. While this too was not reported out, it raised a question as to the jurisdiction of the Foreign Relations Committee over CIA.

5. CONCLUSION

a. During 1958 the Agency has maintained a wider congressional contact than in the past. While criticism and dissatisfaction remain, there is also a greater degree of knowledge about the Agency's activities on the part of an increased number of congressmen, and there is some

reason to believe that at least a portion of those who had been dissatisfied or skeptical are now willing to believe that CIA is competently staffed and effective in its function. At the very least, there is a somewhat broader understanding of the difficulties encountered performing the intelligence role and the limitations on forecasting events throughout the world.

b. There is no question, however, that there is still a major problem in improving the congressional relations generally. One aspect of the problem is that the formally constituted parent subcommittees of the Agency have not taken the time to familiarize themselves with the activities of the Agency to the degree that would seem necessary. While intelligence briefings are well received and the budget is carefully reviewed, particularly in the House Subcommittee on Appropriations, the full nature of the intelligence structure, the method in which it operates, and the problems it faces are little known to the members of the respective subcommittees. The Agency has repeatedly offered briefings on these matters and will continue to press the committees to give more time for this purpose. The other side of the problem is that Congress is inadequately informed by the Agency's parent subcommittees that they do exercise a supervisory role. Knowledgeable congressmen interested in defense and international matters have been unaware that any hearings on CIA are ever held. Through pressure of other affairs, the extremely busy senior men who comprise the parent subcommittees for CIA have been unable to report adequately on their

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supervisory responsibilities. This undoubtedly contributes to criticism and skepticism and to the pressures for a Joint Committee on Intelligence.